United Nations A/C.2/54/SR.16

General Assembly
Fifty-fourth session

Official Records

Distr.: General
7 March 2000
English
Original: Spanish

Second Committee

Summary record of the 16th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 19 October 1999, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Niculescu (Vice-Chairman) ..... (Romania)

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00-27241 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Agenda item 99: Sustainable development and international economic cooperation *(continued)* (A/54/56, A/54/97-E/1999/52, A/54/170, A/54/171-E/1999/111 and A/C.2/54/5)

(a) Implementation of the commitments and policies agreed upon in the Declaration on International Economic Cooperation, in particular the Revitalization of Economic Growth and Development of the Developing Countries, and implementation of the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade

(b) Implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) (A/54/8 and A/54/322)

(d) Human resources development (A/54/408)

(e) International migration and development, including the question of the convening of a United Nations conference on international migration and development to address migration issues (A/54/207 and A/C.2/54/2)

(g) Renewal of the dialogue on strengthening international economic cooperation for development through partnership (A/54/94-S/1999/518 and A/54/328)

1. **Ms. Vargas** (Costa Rica), speaking on sub-item (e), said that Costa Rica was an attractive country for immigrants because democracy and peace prevailed there, it had good human development indexes, and its Constitution accorded foreigners living in its territory the same rights and duties as Costa Ricans.

2. Traditionally, Costa Rica had been a host country for immigrants because it believed that people who abandoned their homeland and their home had very good reasons for doing so and that getting accustomed to a new environment was very hard. Of its population of 3.5 million, more than half a million were immigrants, an extraordinarily high figure.

3. Given that whenever a tragedy occurred as a result of political or economic crises or natural disasters, Costa Rica received waves of immigrants, there was an urgent need for the international community to help it by means of investments, job creation and humanitarian assistance, so that it could deliver health care services and provide education, housing and work for those people, who, if not looked after, would go to whatever other country enabled them to survive. That was the new approach that should be applied with respect to the problem of migrations, namely helping host countries provide jobs and services for immigrants.

4. **Mr. Tchoulkov** (Russian Federation), speaking on sub-item (e), said that the Russian Federation supported the idea of convening a United Nations conference on international migration and development because that would make it possible to discuss the issue at the global level. The conference, which could be modelled on the regional conference on the problems of refugees, displaced persons, other involuntary immigrants and returnees in the countries of the community of independent States and affected neighbouring States, should take a broad and comprehensive approach and deal with all the issues relating to migration, for example coordination of policies, harmonization of legislation and assistance to immigrants. In particular, the various categories of immigrants should be considered. The conference's conclusions should be embodied in a declaration and a programme of action that could be prepared by a committee with the support of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. The Russian Federation was ready to participate in all aspects of the preparatory work, in which the interests of the States most affected by migration should be borne in mind.

5. With regard to sub-item (b), the Russian Federation supported the resolution adopted by the Commission on Human Settlements at its seventeenth session on the basic elements of the reform of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) because it believed that the Centre should be a dynamic international forum with a more efficient and transparent administrative structure. Harmonization and coordination of its activities must be promoted, and it must cooperate with other agencies in drawing up joint programmes. The Russian Federation hoped that as a result of the implementation of the resolution, it would be possible to formulate specific recommendations on the sustainable development of human settlements in

the socio-economic context of the countries of central and eastern Europe.

6. **Mr. Escanero** (Mexico), speaking on sub-item (e), said that the adoption of a comprehensive approach that took into account the causes of the kind of migration referred to, its manifestations and its consequences, would contribute to the strengthening of international dialogue and cooperation in the field of international migration and development. Accordingly, his Government supported the holding of a United Nations conference on the subject, one of the main objectives of which could be to promote high-level political dialogue in order to strengthen international cooperation, including its various regional dimensions.

7. In order to ensure the success of the conference, a sound preparatory process with a broad substantive content should be conducted. It would be necessary to know the magnitude of the problem, determine the similarities and differences among migration phenomena throughout the world and define the types of migration to be dealt with at the conference. The thematic scope should be confined to migration flows other than those of refugees and displaced persons.

8. Consequently, his delegation was in favour of a gradual process, supported by technical studies that took into account the characteristics of migration flows in the different parts of the world. That process should move ahead with the support of the regional commissions, the relevant intergovernmental organs and non-governmental organizations, so as to determine clearly the terms of reference of the conference and foresee the concrete results that would stem from it.

9. **Mr. Ka** (Senegal), speaking on sub-item (e), said that the causes and magnitude of present-day international migrations, the circumstances in which migrants were living in the host countries and their return to their countries of origin were issues that required concerted action worldwide.

10. On considering the possibility of convening the conference on international migration and development, the General Assembly had in its resolution 52/189 confirmed the urgency of a comprehensive and integrated approach to the issue. In addition, given the complex relations between development and international migration, the causes of the phenomenon, which all pointed at underdevelopment, would have to be examined. Senegal, which was a member of the International Organization for Migration and a party to the international conventions on international migration, supported the holding of the conference and hoped that it would consider not only voluntary population movements but also forced displacements, as well as other basic issues relating to development and humanitarian situations.

11. Although international migrations might have their origin in a desire to improve economic prospects, they were very often the result of crises, persecution or mass violations of human rights. That was a fundamental issue which should be dealt with at the conference, since it was not possible to speak of development without peace or protection of human rights. Another issue that should be dealt with was the conditions in which immigrants lived in the host countries, given that despite the universally acknowledged principles and norms, they continued to be victims of mistreatment, xenophobia and discrimination of all kinds. Their rights must be guaranteed and safeguarded in all types of circumstances, even if they were illegal.

12. The conference might also serve as a starting point for a world awareness campaign on the economic, cultural and social contributions of migrants in the host country. That campaign, which should continue with long-term educational work, would also help integrate migrants into the host society.

13. The question of international migration was of concern both to the countries of origin and to the transit and host countries. A common denominator must be found so as to build on it the foundations of a civilized society that fully respected universally acknowledged rules and values.

14. **Mr. Hønningstad** (Norway) said that the most important aspects of the new work programme of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements were the two global campaigns scheduled for 2000 on secure tenure and urban governance. Norway had actively supported the revitalization of the Centre by providing financial and human resources as a follow-up to the commitments made at the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II). In addition, that support was part of its contribution to the overall United Nations reform process.

15. A successful strategy for poverty eradication must be based, *inter alia*, on recognition of the importance of sustainable human settlements

development. Given that the most serious problems which lay ahead in that area were rooted in rapid urbanization, especially in the developing countries, it was urgent to slow the growth of slums, the increase in poverty and the social exclusion of increasing numbers of people who were living under intolerable conditions.

16. In that connection, the Global Campaign on Secure Tenure, to which Norway had recently contributed 2 million Norwegian kroner (approximately US$ 250,000), might have important repercussions. Without guarantees of tenure, not only would people lack incentives to invest in their homes, but vulnerable groups would be deprived of the opportunity to attain a more decent standard of living. In that context, special attention must be paid to the needs of women and children. Insecure tenure was an obstacle to progress in the human settlements field and in society as a whole. The campaign was a good example of how the United Nations could play a constructive role in efforts to eradicate poverty.

17. Norway supported the preparatory work done so far for the Conference to review the results of Habitat II. Given the importance of a broad-based preparatory process which included representatives of local government and civil society, Norway supported the decision taken by the Preparatory Committee in that regard (A/54/322, para. 14). It was to be hoped that an executive director could be appointed as soon as possible so that the momentum of the revitalization process could be maintained.

18. With regard to sub-item (e), Norway was pleased that in the recommendations drawn up at its twenty-first special session, on population and development, the General Assembly had given high priority to stronger protection of the human rights of migrants. Given the complexity of the issue of migration, the Norwegian Government had provided financial support for the Technical Symposium on International Migration and Development held in The Hague in 1998 in order to promote the development of better methodologies for studying the subject. While in principle it would be in agreement with the idea of holding an international conference on migration, Norway believed that the issue should first be pursued at the regional level.

19. Lastly, with regard to sub-item (g), Norway was in favour of the Secretary-General's proposal (A/54/328) that the topic of the second high-level dialogue should be "Responding to the challenges of globalization: strengthening regional cooperation and building new partnerships for development". Nevertheless, to ensure the continued relevance of the dialogue the theme should be as clearly defined and focused as possible. It would also be useful to set the dates for the meeting as early as possible to ensure that high-level participants would be able to attend.

20. **Mr. Lewis** (Antigua and Barbuda), speaking on behalf of the 36 countries members of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) that were also Members of the United Nations, fully supported the statement made by the representative of Guyana on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

21. Since the holding of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992, progress had been made in fulfilling the pledge to protect the environment. Increasingly, environmental objectives were important factors in policy formation. The international community possessed the means required to fulfil the promise achieved at Rio. For the small island developing States, two factors were of vital importance in attaining sustainable development, human resource development and partnership.

22. The importance of the comprehensive approach to human resources development outlined in the Secretary-General's note (A/52/140) should be emphasized. For the small island developing States, human capital was the most precious resource. Given their smallness and vulnerability, they needed to place special emphasis on education at all levels, and also to pay particular attention to environmental studies, science and technology. A further critical area was the training of policy makers, specially in areas of natural resource management and sustainable development.

23. The Barbados Programme of Action and the recent special session of the General Assembly to review and evaluate its implementation had recognized the importance of human resources development to the survival of the small island States. Only in that way would they be able to strengthen their national institutions and administrative capacity and promote the growth of their industries. Human resources development was also beneficial to businesses, which currently lacked the knowledge and experience required to innovate and adapt to changing technology so as to compete in the world market.

24. In the preparations for the special session, the countries members of AOSIS had identified a total of 311 projects for consideration by donors and the international community. They all had a common element, namely the urgent need for human resources development. The member countries of AOSIS were determined to meet the challenges of the next century, but they needed the assistance of the international community in order to assume their place in the new global economy. Without that help, the lack of institutional and technological capacity would inhibit their development and threaten their survival.

25. In the Barbados Declaration on the Sustainable Development of the Small Island Developing States, approved in 1994, the international community had emphasized the need for joint action to attain the objectives set. The small island States would like to feel that the international community was still committed to the Declaration; for their part, they would continue with their efforts to enhance that partnership.

26. The results of the twenty-second special session of the General Assembly confirmed the validity of the Barbados Programme of Action, which was essential for the small island States. The member countries of AOSIS were striving to build on existing partnerships and establish new linkages. They were building on national commitments through more effective partnerships, in particular with a United Nations system that was able to provide them with more support through the relevant regional organizations. They also intended to improve their links with civil society and promote the involvement of the private sector. The central message of the Barbados Programme of Action was the need for a partnership approach, but the small island developing States had the impression that that message was not always being heard. As had been pointed out even in the reports of the Secretary-General, since the Barbados conference there had been a significant decline in the total amount of bilateral and multilateral assistance received by those countries. That would not dampen their efforts, but it should be recalled that in 1994 the international community had assumed a commitment to partnership with the small island developing States and to share in resources and expertise so as to ensure the success of the Programme of Action.

27. **Mr. Ierulescu** (Romania), speaking on sub-item (d), associated himself with the statement made by the representative of Finland on behalf of the European Union and its associated States. The first session of the high-level meeting of the dialogue on the economic and social repercussions of globalization, the twentieth special session of the General Assembly on the global drug problem and the series of high-level sessions of the Economic and Social Council held in the past three years had yielded positive results in various normative spheres and had facilitated the identification of points of common interest in the globalization process. The special high-level meeting of the Economic and Social Council and the Bretton Woods institutions held in April 1999 had also afforded an opportunity to analyse the functioning of international financial markets and the issue of the stability of financing for development.

28. All of those deliberations held within the United Nations on the problems of globalization complemented the first high-level dialogue on the strengthening of international cooperation for development through partnership.

29. Among the topics suggested for the second high-level dialogue (A/54/328), the one proposed by Romania, "Promoting economic security: objective of the national strategies and of the international cooperation for development through partnership", would give an opportunity to analyse the basic factors contributing to economic security and social welfare and, ultimately, economic security, namely training of personnel, capacity-building and the creation of infrastructure. Romania hoped that that proposal would receive due consideration when the topic for future high-level dialogues was selected. The proposal by the Secretary-General appearing in the document referred to above would make it possible to focus the debate on strengthening regional cooperation, bearing in mind the events that were taking place in Central and Eastern Europe. The issue of mobilization of national resources for development was being posed at an appropriate time, and should be examined when the topic for the second high-level dialogue had been decided upon.

30. In view of the busy programme schedule for 2000, he agreed that the second dialogue should be postponed until the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly. He also agreed with the proposed approach (A/54/328, paras. 16 and 17) with regard to the participants in the preparatory process.

31. **Mr. Öztürk** (Turkey), speaking on sub-item (b), welcomed the preparations for the special session of the General Assembly for an overall review and

appraisal of the implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II).

32. One of the great accomplishments of the Istanbul Conference had been the participation of a broad range of institutions. Ultimately, the attainment of the goals of Habitat II would depend on the mobilization of civil society, especially at the local level. Accordingly, the Habitat Agenda emphasized the building of effective participatory institutions, especially at that level.

33. In that context, his Government reiterated its offer to establish a regional office of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) in Turkey. That office, which could deliver services to a large number of countries in Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia would facilitate the decentralization and outreach process already begun. His Government was working on the project in coordination with local authorities and other partners in Turkey, together with the Centre. It hoped to receive the support of the countries in the region for the establishment and, eventually, the operational activities of the office.

34. With respect to sub-item (e), regarding the possibility of holding a United Nations conference on international migration and development, the objectives and outcome of the conference could be: to discuss emerging issues and problems related to international migration in the light of the recent global social and economic transformations; to determine the measures to be taken by Governments, civil society and international organizations to solve those problems, bearing in mind the causes and consequences of international migration and the relationship between international migration and development; and to intensify efforts for the maintenance of international cooperation between countries of origin and destination. At the end of the conference, a programme of action and a declaration could be adopted which should cover all types of migrants.

35. **Mr. Kasri** (Indonesia), speaking on sub-items (d) and (g), associated himself with the statement made by the delegation of Guyana on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. As the new millennium approached, critical problems still persisted in the field of human settlements. While progress had been made thanks to the measures and strategies agreed upon at the international conferences on the subject and implemented in national, regional and international plans under the coordination of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), various international agencies and donor countries, much still remained to be done. A major part of the world's population still faced intolerable living conditions, which were further aggravated by the rapid pace of urbanization, increased poverty and the negative effects of globalization. Moreover, the lack of financial resource posed an obstacle to the implementation of the Habitat Agenda by Governments and, in particular, by local authorities.

36. In Indonesia, the financial crisis had had negative consequences for the implementation of the Agenda. The Government's ability to provide adequate subsidized shelter for low-income people throughout the country had been severely undermined. However, the Government was still striving to pursue a major programme of reform involving extensive and fundamental legal and institutional transformation. That transformation could facilitate the full implementation of the Habitat Agenda at the national and local levels. Many of the activities affected by the financial crisis could still be implemented if the Centre, in tandem with other United Nations funds and programmes and other international agencies, would provide its full support.

37. Implementation of the Habitat Agenda at the national and local levels required a strong commitment of the international community to re-invigorate international cooperation for, among other things, capacity-building, technical assistance and the transfer of technology and additional financial resources. That was critical, especially for the developing countries. There was also a need to strengthen the role of the Centre in promoting and coordinating the implementation of the global plan of action of the Habitat Agenda.

38. The progress made in revitalizing the Centre was encouraging, and the new strategic vision would help advance the Agenda in accordance with the Centre's objectives for the biennium 2000-2001. It was to be hoped that the revitalization plan would encourage all Governments, particularly those of donor countries, to provide financial resources so that the Centre could implement its work programme and streamline and improve its financial and administrative management. In that regard, his delegation welcomed the General Assembly's endorsement of the Secretary-General's

recommendations on environment and human settlements (A/53/463, para. 53).

39. With regard to the preparations for the special session of the General Assembly to review and appraise the implementation of the Habitat Agenda, Indonesia welcomed the work and the results of the Preparatory Committee at its first meeting, and fully supported the proposal that its first substantive session should be held in Nairobi (Kenya) from 8-12 May 2000. It also welcomed the recommendations appearing in paragraph 22 of the report (A/54/322).

40. Indonesia was in agreement with the Secretary-General's proposal that the items for the first session should include review of the action taken at the national and local levels, partnership and the role of civil society and the monitoring mechanism and international cooperation. It should merely be added that the involvement of United Nations organizations and specialized agencies, including the Bretton Woods institutions, as well as of the regional commissions, should be further encouraged. A high-level regional meeting should be held to exchange experience and facilitate the adoption of joint measures with the support of regional intergovernmental organizations and regional development banks, the issue of international cooperation for generating new and additional financial resources should also be addressed.

41. With regard to the renewal of the dialogue on strengthening international economic cooperation for development through partnership, both developed and developing countries must respond to the concern aroused by globalization, development, underdevelopment and poverty in a constructive spirit of partnership. With that same spirit, it should be possible to find a way of maximizing the benefits of globalization for all countries and minimizing its setbacks. That work had already begun with the first high-level dialogue and the resolution approved by the General Assembly at its fifty-third session in which it was decided to renew the dialogue every two years so as to sustain the impetus for international cooperation.

42. Given that during the Millennium Assembly many meetings and conferences would be held, it would be appropriate for the high-level meeting on renewal of the dialogue to be postponed until the fifty-sixth session in 2001 so as to take fully into account the results of those and other relevant United Nations conferences. The general topics of the meeting could be decided on at the current session of the General Assembly, and the details at a later date. The theme proposed by the Secretary-General could be the general theme of the dialogue, and the idea of focusing specifically on the challenges of globalization was a practical one. In that connection, it was important to strengthen regional cooperation and establish new partnerships for development. The holding of meetings attended by Governments, the United Nations system and other relevant international organizations, as well as civil society, the business community and non-governmental organizations, among others, would facilitate widespread participation in the preparations for the high-level dialogue.

43. **Mr. Cabactulan** (Philippines), after associating his delegation with the statement made by the delegation of Guyana on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the Philippines followed with keen interest the work of the Commission on Human Settlements, particularly in monitoring and evaluating the performance of all the participants in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda. The progress of the Agenda could be properly evaluated only when the international community had commonly agreed comparable human settlements and shelter indicators.

44. His delegation supported all the efforts to revitalize and strengthen the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), since it played a pivotal role in that area and in seeing to it that the provisions of the Habitat Agenda were reflected in operational activities. It also supported the resolution on the subject to be submitted to the General Assembly for approval.

45. With regard to international migration and development, the report of the Secretary-General (A/54/207) contained a balanced appreciation of the available information on the subject and an update on the latest developments or activities in the field. On the basis of that report, a decision should already be taken to hold an international conference, as the majority of the countries that had responded were in favour of doing so. In that connection it should be pointed out that as early as 1995, at the Cartagena Summit of the Non-aligned Movement, there had already been agreement in that respect. However, it was not simply a matter of there being a majority, but of convincing those who remained reluctant to hold an international discussion of an issue so vital to all and which equally affected sending, receiving and transit countries. Many

countries were both sending and receiving countries, and in one way or another migration was a global phenomenon going back to the beginning of history. His delegation was confident that the number of Members of the United Nations in favour of holding the conference would increase.

46. It might be necessary to analyse in greater detail such matters as the objectives and financing of the proposed conference and the composition of its secretariat, on which there was still not consensus. It was extremely important to have a clear idea of what the ultimate goals were. Countries needed to be assured that they were protecting their respective national borders, upholding their respective sovereignty, safeguarding the dignity of the individual and protecting all his rights, and promoting the cause of sustained and equitable development for all. Nothing should prevent further consideration of the issue, for after all, what was aimed at was the common good.

47. Regarding the proposed themes for the second high-level dialogue on strengthening international economic cooperation for development through partnership, his delegation had no specific preference, but wished to indicate that the dialogue could promote broader and deeper understanding of issues that cut across individual, regional or group interests. Accordingly, it would be appropriate to examine in greater detail the proposals by Bangladesh, Ghana, Romania, and the United States.

48. Regarding the holding of the conference, his delegation believed there should be no further delay and that perhaps the Millennium Assembly would be the most appropriate setting.

49. **Mr. Bocoum** (Mali) supported the statement made by the delegation of Guyana on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on the report of the Secretary-General on the renewal of the dialogue on the strengthening of international cooperation for development through partnership (A/54/328). The greatest challenge of modern times was attaining sustainable human development through international economic cooperation mechanisms based on a spirit of partnership. The international community must find ways of attaining that objective. The decrease in official development assistance, both bilateral and multilateral, must be reversed, especially when it was not compensated for by major flows of private capital. It was important to eliminate the price instability of main commodities, as it affected the economic performance of the developing countries and made the programming of development activities extraordinarily difficult owing to the uncertainty of export revenues. Mali had placed great hopes in the Summit of the South to be held in Cuba in 2000, and trusted that on that occasion new foundations would be laid for partnership among the countries of the South and a constructive would be initiated with the north for the benefit of the advancement of the whole of mankind.

50. Unfortunately, the crushing debt burden continued to weigh on the countries of the South, impairing their long-term development prospects. The trend was increasing towards a world economy dominated by consumers and arbitrated by financial markets. Nevertheless, Mali was aware that it was essential to reconcile the imperative of productivity and competitiveness with social cohesion, the principle of an open society with the duty of solidarity, and efficiency with equilibrium. If globalization was a phenomenon that would last a long time, there was a need to ensure that countries with serious limitations and scarce resources, like Mali, did not suffer too much from its effects.

51. Mali had already stated, in the General Assembly, its opposition to globalization dominated by the market and the world of finance to the detriment of globalization that centred on sustainable human development, and had also expressed its profound conviction that the current imbalances could be resolved through a political dialogue in which the problems were approached with a global and mutually supportive vision based on genuine partnership and an equitable division of responsibility, with a view to building a better world.

52. For the developing countries, the encouragement of cooperation at the continent-wide level, and particularly subregional cooperation, was of the highest importance. The establishment of cooperation mechanisms that facilitated regional economic integration would make it possible to develop indigenous capabilities and would have a positive effect for those countries in the context of international trade.

53. With regard to the renewal of the dialogue on international economic cooperation, the millions of people currently living in poverty must always be borne in mind. It was impossible to resist the

temptation to speak of the millions of small farmers who, despite hunger and adversities, preferred to live off livestock feed than to turn to begging. Mention had to be made of the courage of the women who cared for their families while bearing with dignity all the difficulties of daily life. Nor was it possible to forget the thousands of children who died of malnutrition before reaching the age of five when there were people in the world living in plenty. Mali urged all those working for development to form a strategic coalition designed to combat poverty and hunger through integrated programmes that reached across frontiers, for the sake of peace and human fulfilment.

54. Even so, it was an acknowledged fact that every country bore the basic responsibility for its own development, for the elimination of poverty and for the maintenance of a political climate that guaranteed peace and security and respect for human rights. At the same time, the dialogue had never been as intense, or the international community as receptive. Now was the time to create partnerships that made it possible to promote not only economic development and trade, but also social progress and the protection of the environment. The international community must make a firm commitment to create an environment conducive to the development of human values.

55. It was hard to understand why some States had still not recognized the need to allocate 0.7 per cent of their GDP to official development assistance; what was more, in recent years the contribution of some countries to UNDP had considerably decreased. The support of the international community was very necessary, and would be more useful if it was based on genuine dialogue and genuine partnership.

56. **Ms. Dinić** (Croatia) welcomed the report of the Secretary-General on the preparations for the special session of the General Assembly for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the outcome of the Habitat II (A/54/322). Croatia had participated actively in drafting the Habitat Agenda, had joined in the Istanbul consensus in 1996 and attached great importance to the implementation of the Agenda.

57. Croatia was a small country, and its population of 4.8 million was spread among more than 6,500 small settlements. There was only one large urban agglomeration, where 20 per cent of the population lived. In view of those characteristics, it had adopted a more integrated physical planning system which took into account the parameters laid down in the Habitat Agenda. The 1994 Physical Planning Act specified the methods of achieving that approach, and the related strategy and programme were the essential strategic documents for the development and physical planning of towns and for Croatia's sustainable development.

58. The Physical Planning Programme encouraged the more harmonious development of the urban system. Given Croatia's specific characteristics, the implementation of the Habitat Agenda would centre on developing medium-sized and small towns and communities; an effort would also be made to slow the growth of population in the large cities.

59. In Croatia, it had been necessary to create specific incentives and adopt comprehensive concepts to development planning in order to adopt adequate measures to revitalizing settlements and their economies. The Government provided assistance for the reconstruction and development of areas of special concern, one example was the national programme for the sustainable development of the Adriatic island communities. Under the national reconstruction and development programme, which incorporated the principles of sustainable growth and the guidelines of the Habitat Agenda, special attention was also being paid to war-damaged areas, border areas and rural and mountainous regions.

60. The housing sector had undergone a marked transition to market principles. Since 1991, approximately 94 per cent of public housing in Croatia had become privately owned. The situation had become further accentuated since the armed conflict, in that priority had begun to be given to rebuilding destroyed and damaged housing, particularly with a view to solving the problem of lack of housing for refugees and displaced persons, many of them war invalids.

61. In order to implement the Habitat Agenda and the National Plan of Activities, physical planning measures and development programmes had been adopted with a view to advancing the condition of human settlements. However, follow-up of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda at the national level and the progress made in achieving its goals were also an intrinsic element, involving the preparation of biennial reports on physical planning and measures to improve the conditions in counties, cities and municipalities. Croatia believed that more detailed indicators need to be drawn up so as to provide an effective means of

evaluating the real situation and the growth trends of each town. In that way, qualitative and quantitative indicators would be produced that were essential for the planning, follow-up and assessment of progress with regard to the quality of housing and the development of sustainable human settlements.

62. Population growth and urbanization were closely interlinked processes. In the context of human settlements, that link needed to be examined, including the pronounced differences that existed with regard to wealth and class and race. In that connection, the recommendation made by the Human Settlements Commission at its seventeenth session that issues relating to Habitat should be considered at the coordination meetings of the Economic and Social Council in 2000 was a timely one.

63. **Ms. Wong** (Singapore), referring to the report of the Secretary-General (A/54/207) on sub-item (e), said there was a misconception that in international migration, the receiving countries were the sole beneficiaries, while the sending countries were disadvantaged. In fact, international migration was a complex issue, and had an impact on both: both parties had a responsibility towards migrants. There were many forms of migration - economic migration, forced migration, internal migration and refugees. Singapore understood the point of view of both sending and receiving countries because it had received migrants, and also because many of its nationals had emigrated.

64. According to the Secretary-General's report, while many Governments were in favour of convening a conference on international migration and development, they constituted only a small proportion of the full membership of the United Nations, and even among them there was no consensus on the objectives, the agenda, the financing and the composition of the conference secretariat.

65. It should be noted that the Technical Symposium on International Migration and Development, held in The Hague in July 1998, had reported that there was a lack of adequate data to allow an understanding of the phenomenal migration, which often led to the perpetuation of myths that were a weak basis for policy formulation. It had also found that it would not be fruitful to convene a conference on migration and development at a time when there was no convergence of interests.

66. Migration issues had been well publicized through forums such as the International Conference on Population and Development, the World Summit for Social Development and the fourth World Conference on Women. Rather than convening another international conference, the existing resources should be devoted to the mechanisms that dealt with migration, such as the Commission on Population and Development, the Economic and Social Council, and the International Labour Organization and other specialized agencies. It would be more useful to compile additional data on that complex issue, which did not lend itself to immediate solutions. Accordingly, her Government believed that for the time being, the idea of holding a United Nations conference on international migration should be dropped.

67. **Archbishop Martino** (Observer for the Holy See), speaking on sub-item (a), referred to a particular question relating to sustainable development and international economic cooperation, namely the negative effects of sanctions. Since the ending of the cold war, the Security Council, invoking Chapter VII of the Charter, had on a number of occasions imposed sanctions on countries not complying with its decisions. While it might be unavoidable and justifiable to apply measures against a regime which posed a threat to international peace and security, economic sanctions, which affected an entire population, should be considered separately.

68. In fact, the question constituted one of the unfinished chapters of contemporary international law. The primary aim of sanctions was not to punish, but rather to coerce the targeted Government into a change of behaviour. As coercive, though non-military, measures, sanctions must observe the letter and the spirit of humanitarian law and must not have indiscriminate or disproportionate effects on the civilian population. If under economic sanctions the entire agrarian sector and other infrastructures in a country were destroyed, if the child mortality rate increased excessively, if a high proportion of babies were born underweight owing to malnutrition of mothers, if school enrolment was halved, if the majority of schools and hospitals could not operate and if there was a shortage of drinking water, that clearly indicated that economic sanctions had not been effective.

69. In most cases, the population became a victim of conflicts; it was already psychologically shaken and

economically impoverished. In such circumstances, the humiliation, exclusion and weakening of civil society that resulted from economic sanctions could delay the long-term possibility of establishing a free and democratic society in the targeted State. In addition, as history taught, the imposition of long-standing sanctions often strengthened regimes which had pushed their countries into aggression or unwarranted conflict, since they distracted attention from the violations of fundamental human rights perpetrated by those regimes and directed it towards a so-called "common enemy". The population then held to the leadership as the only way out.

70. Moreover, it was impossible to ignore the negative impact of economic sanctions on third countries, especially those which for geographical or historical reasons were closely linked with the targeted State. Such countries might suffer devastating economic and social consequences without receiving any compensation or any recognition of the burden they bore. In addition, as the recent past had shown, the complexity of the humanitarian aid projects approved parallel to economic sanctions and the bureaucratic problems might even aggravate the situation, instead of improving it.

71. The Holy See believed that before economic sanctions were proposed, their goals and objectives should be clearly defined, so that it would be possible to evaluate the progress made by the targeted nation and progressively ease the sanctions regime as those objectives were attained. The possible humanitarian consequences should also be evaluated, and if possible quantified. The results of that process should be explicitly indicated in all resolutions imposing sanctions.

72. The Holy See also believed that the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations could not become instruments in the hands of the rich and powerful to punish the poor and powerless of the world, because the consequences were inhuman and immoral. While it held fast to the principle that grave transgressions could not be tolerated, it appealed to the conscience of the international community to reconsider the negative consequences of the present mechanism of economic sanctions. It was prepared to support a different and more just mechanism, as had been recommended at the second Seminar on Targeting United Nations Financial Sanctions, held in Interlaken (Switzerland) in March 1999.

73. **Mr. Ma Xuesong** (China), speaking on sub-item (a), emphasized the continued relevance of the Declaration on International Economic Cooperation and the International Development Strategy for the fourth United Nations Development Decade. While a vast number of developing countries had carried out extensive economic reforms and structural adjustments in the context of the Declaration and the Strategy, the unjust international economic order and the obstacles to international development cooperation had seriously hampered their effective implementation. His delegation called upon the international community, especially the developed countries, to realize to the full the commitments made with respect to development financing, debt, trade and technology transfer, so as to create an environment favourable to the attainment by developing countries of their economic and social objectives.

74. With regard to the question of human settlements, which had become increasingly important, China had been guided by two major goals, namely "shelter for all" and "sustainable development of human settlements". With the participation of all, from the central Government to local communities, reforms had been introduced in the housing sector and visible progress had been achieved, for example in increasing per capita living space and more sustainable planning.

75. China was pleased that the Commission on Human Settlements, as the preparatory committee for the special session of the General Assembly for an overall review and appraisal of the Habitat Agenda, had begun its work, and would soon begin the substantive review which would lay the groundwork for the success of the special session.

76. Human resources were the most dynamic productive factor, and their development must be people-centred. Although responsibility in that regard rested mainly with the Government of each country, the international community should do more to help the developing countries. It was to be hoped that the United Nations agencies would continue to give priority to human resources development. His Government attached great importance to the subject, and was pursuing a strategy of achieving prosperity through science and education. It also stood ready to strengthen cooperation with other countries and relevant international organizations.

77. International migration was an extremely complex problem, and its economic, social and political effects could not be neglected. Their solution called for a more just and equitable international order, as well as for an environment more conducive to reducing the imbalances between north and south. The international community must encourage sending and receiving countries to cooperate on the basis of dialogue on an equal footing that would be beneficial for all.

78. With respect to international economic cooperation, it was clear that the accelerated pace of globalization made it necessary to regulate that process, and China accordingly welcomed the opportunities to discuss the issue, such as the high-level dialogue that had taken place in September 1998. International development cooperation must be revitalized through strengthened dialogue and partnerships; future high-level dialogues should continue to give priority to topics of international development and cooperation, among other issues. The international community must do all it could to maintain the vigour of development cooperation and to turn consensus into action; that cooperation must be channelled in the right direction and must respect the autonomy of developing countries in choosing their parts of development.

79. **Ms. Lubin** (International Labour Organization) said that the International Labour Organization (ILO) had a clear awareness of the need to regulate the flow of migration and to protect migrant workers and their families from exploitation.

80. Since 1919, the year in which ILO was established, the Organization had dealt actively with those issues. The year following its foundation, it had approved a recommendation dealing precisely with equality of treatment between nationals and migrant workers. The International Labour Conference had approved four conventions on migrant workers and their conditions of employment, the provision of technical assistance to Governments in the development of migration policy and regulation, the conduct of research to evaluate the factors leading to migration and the provision of guidelines for the delivery of appropriate services to migrant workers and their families. In June 1999 the International Labour Office had submitted to the Committee on Application of Conventions a report on migrant workers which indicated the number of ratifications of the relevant conventions and summarized the reports received from 96 governments and 10 metropolitan territories. It also outlined migration trends and suggested actions that might be taken to adapt standards, both international and national, to the changed world situation and the current problems faced by migrants and their families. One of those problems was the growing feminization of migration and the frequency with which women migrants fell prey to prostitution and other forms of exploitation. In 1997, ILO had initiated a project designed to improve the working conditions and welfare of migrant women, particularly Filipino and Indonesian women who migrated for work in the domestic sector.

81. Another factor that must be borne in mind was the great increase in illegal migration. A distinction was now made between legally and illegally employed migrants, but when the ILO instruments had been drafted, the main distinction had been between temporary and permanent migrants. However, the agreements drawn up to regulate temporary migration were now seldom used, with the result that temporary migrants were not usually protected. Accordingly, ILO contributed to the repatriation and absorption of migrants, who needed to find appropriate jobs and integrate themselves, with their family members, into society.

82. In that context, ILO provided technical assistance to Governments, on request, to resolve problems relating to migration, and frequently made use of both employers and workers who were aware of the local problems. It also worked with Governments which wished to negotiate bilateral or multilateral agreements to deal with migration problems, making use of the standards laid down in its conventions and recommendations.

83. With respect to permanent migration, ILO, which had stressed the importance of family reunification, had drawn up a recommendation and a convention which defined the members of the family who could be reunited with migrants, as well as the social arrangements that might be needed.

84. ILO had launched a programme to study practices of maltreatment of migrant workers. It had also begun a labour migration database which would be available on the Internet to provide quantitative and qualitative information on the living and working conditions of migrants.

85. ILO had participated in the planning of the Technical Symposium on International Migration and Development held in The Hague (Netherlands) .n June 1998, which had contributed to a better understanding of the economic, social, cultural, gender and human rights dimensions of migration.

86. Together with the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), ILO would be co-sponsoring a programme aimed at developing long-term institutional capacity in the area of international migration policy.

87. With regard to the holding of a United Nations conference on international migration and development, ILO proposed that such a conference should be based on the principles embodied in existing international instruments on migration and should foster a better understanding of those instruments. It should be a technical meeting designed to obtain broad consensus on the current issues of employment and protection of migrant workers and their families.

88. With regard to sub-item (b), ILO pointed out that the two themes of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (HABITAT II) — adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements in an organizing world — raised important issues for ILO's tripartite constituents. Given that in any parts of the world urbanization led to an increase in informal employment, the difficulty of simultaneously raising productivity and incomes and providing social protection in the informal sector had become a growing concern within ILO, which had begun working with various bodies, including municipal authorities, to meet that challenge.

89. The International Symposium on Trade Unions and the Informal Sector currently being held in Geneva should be instrumental in increasing incomes, working conditions and social protection for the informal sector. ILO, for its part, continued to participate actively in the International Forum on Urban Poverty, which was a coordination mechanism for the activities carried out in the United Nations system to meet the objectives of the Habitat Agenda.

90. **Ms. Ndiaye** (International Organization for Migration (IOM)), speaking on sub-item (e), said that although there was a clear relationship between international migration and development, it was not always obvious that the greater part of international migration took place between developing countries and not only from the South to the North. Another aspect that should be borne in mind was that migration was now a global phenomenon. Almost all countries had become receiving countries, countries of transit or sending countries, and some were becoming all three. Although statistics indicated that in the mid-1990s, 125 million people had been living outside their own country, they did not give a full picture of the magnitude of the phenomenon, because it was difficult to reflect the increase in irregular migration or to determine to what extent migration was a net cost or a net contribution, and what was the real cost, for developing countries, of the loss of qualified personnel. It was not possible to give adequate answers unless the size of the migrant population was adequately known.

91. Those had been the main issues discussed at the Technical Symposium held in The Hague (Netherlands) in 1998. IOM had collaborated actively with the United Nations working group that had planned the Symposium. At the meeting, a large amount of data had been made known which had contributed to better understanding of the phenomenon of migration. As a result, IOM had been able to improve the programming of its activities, which were grouped into six categories: transport of migrants, medical services for migrants, trafficking in migrants, dissemination of information, assistance to returnees and technical cooperation.

92. In the past decade, considerable progress had been made in the international debate on migration. For example, there was more recognition of the need to formulate policies that took into account the relationship between migration, official development assistance, trade, investment and population and social development policies. Although in some countries internal governmental mechanisms had already been established for that purpose, the question of international migration should be taken up at the national and international levels, and in order to achieve a viable solution to it the sending countries and the receiving countries needed to engage in constant dialogue and cooperation. IOM was participating in a number of regional initiatives to deal with migration problems, and assigned priority to the task of supporting regional consultative mechanisms. One example of those mechanisms was the Pueblo Process in Central and North America, which had demonstrated

that dialogue promoted understanding of common problems and could lead to the formulation of strategies on issues as diverse as trafficking in migrants and the protection of their rights. Similar processes were in the course of preparation in Asia, in the countries of the former Soviet Union, in Latin America and in Africa.

93. The efforts made to promote constructive dialogue among sending, transit and receiving countries would ultimately help improve the handling of migration-related problems. That would be basic to solving the problems associated with the current trends and reaping the benefits of orderly migration. In that connection, IOM contributed to regional dialogue in the context of its technical cooperation programmes, through which it was able to share its experience and recommended practices.

94. Lastly, it should be pointed out that one of the most difficult problems relating to migration, and one which affected both developed and developing countries, was irregular migration. In that context, IOM assigned priority to cooperation for the repatriation of migrants, and conducted programmes that linked repatriation to the development of the countries of origin.

95. In the course of the past year, IOM had worked closely with the United Nations. In Central America, it had cooperated with UNDP in providing assistance to the victims of Hurricane Mitch. In East Timor, it had provided assistance to Timorese living abroad so that they could participate in the plebiscite, and in collaboration with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) had organized the humanitarian evacuation of tens of thousands of Kosovar Albanians from Macedonia, and subsequently their voluntary return to Kosovo. In addition, together with UNITAR and UNFPA, IOM had organized courses on legislation and policies relating to migration for the emerging democracies and developing countries of Europe and southern Africa. In Angola and Kosovo, IOM had cooperated with the United Nations in the process of reintegration of demobilized troops and their family members. Most recently, in cooperation with UNHCR, IOM had concerned itself with organizing the voluntary return of the displaced East Timorese. It had just signed a cooperation agreement with the United Nations Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS and a memorandum of understanding with the World Health Organization for the taking of joint initiatives relating to the health of migrants which would pay special attention to the African continent.

96. Given that migration was a global phenomenon, IOM urged the bodies of the United Nations system to unite their efforts to respond appropriately to the challenges of migration and development.

97. **Mr Sung-Yun Hwang** (Republic of Korea), speaking on sub-item (1a), said that the attainment of the established goals and objectives for achieving sustainable development must be pursued in a holistic manner. Unfortunately, on the threshold of a new millennium many developing countries were still plagued by absolute poverty, external debt and economic underdevelopment. That situation was compounded by the adverse consequences of globalization on development, which had been highlighted by the Asian financial crisis. Given that, in the Declaration on Economic Cooperation and the Strategy for the fourth United Nations Development Decade, the international community had laid down the goals and objectives of sustainable development, managing the risks of globalization was crucial to fully implementing the commitments contained in those instruments.

98. The ultimate goal of the development process should be balanced growth. Economic growth could not be the sole benchmark for determining the level of development. Social goals such as equity, gender, education and health should be incorporated at the initial stage of elaborating development strategies.

99. Secondly, an international enabling environment must be created that would make it possible to meet the needs of developing countries in their efforts to achieve sustainable development. In particular, the international trade and finance system needed to be improved so as to fully integrate developing countries into the global economy and successfully tackle the adverse consequences of globalization. Continued efforts were also needed to mobilize international financial resources, particularly official development assistance. In view of the catalytic role of that type of assistance, the flows of resources of that kind must be prevented from decreasing.

100. Thirdly, countries must meet some basic conditions in order to achieve the goal of sustainable development: they must adopt sound macroeconomic policies and banking practices, they must ensure good

governance, and Governments should assume a key role in creating conditions conducive to sustainable development by serving as facilitators rather than as regulators.

101. With respect to sub-item (g), the first high-level dialogue on the strengthening of international economic cooperation had laid the foundations for building a genuine development partnership. In order to achieve more tangible results, the next dialogue should focus more on specific aspects of international economic cooperation, cooperation for development and policy-making.

102. Given that all stakeholders, including civil society and the private sector, had been able to participate in the first high-level dialogue, it was to be hoped that the next one would further promote constructive interaction among participants.

103. **Mr. Osio** (Nigeria), after supporting the statement made by the delegation of Guyana on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, stressed that the most important challenge for the 1990s was revitalizing the economic and social development of the developing countries with a view to achieving sustainable growth of the world economy and favourable external conditions.

104. In order to attain the objectives laid down in the Declaration on International Economic Cooperation, the developing countries needed to be better prepared to counter the negative impacts of globalization. Consequently, the International Development Strategy must be directed towards obtaining the greatest possible benefits from, *inter alia*, the liberalization of trade, measures to ease the external debt burden, poverty eradication plan and programmes, human resources development and capacity-building measures.

105. With regard to human resources development, the stress placed in the report of the Secretary-General (A/54/408) on empowering women and young people and on other aspects of the broader work with respect to human rights was commendable.

106. One of the most important rights of all peoples and nations was the right to development. However, that development served no purpose unless proper use was made of human capital. Human resources were the most valuable asset of any nation, whether developed or developing. International cooperation measures should be taken that would make it possible to incorporate the benefits of new information technologies into programmes for the utilization of developing countries' human resources.

107. His delegation stressed the importance of the dialogue on the strengthening of international economic cooperation for development through partnership, particularly in multilateral relations. The need was increasingly apparent to strengthen that dialogue at the regional and interregional levels, particularly in the present era of globalization and liberalization of the world economy. It was to be hoped that the issues discussed would have a positive effect on the lives of all peoples of the world, especially in the developing countries.

The meeting rose at 5.40 p.m.